

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-34 are pending in the present application. Claims 16 and 17 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 16-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Rosenberg et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2002/0109668, herein "Rosenberg"), which is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Briefly recapitulating, independent Claim 18 is directed to a method for operating a haptic interface unit. The method includes, *inter alia*, providing a holding force mode in which an absolute force value of an interaction feedback force or a vectorial component thereof is increased in a position dependent form to a predetermined hold force value or above, if the respective velocity or a vectorial component thereof decreases below a given threshold minimum velocity value, the predetermined hold force value being larger than the interaction feedback force within the inverted damping operation mode.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 1A shows the interaction feedback force having a variable value within the inverted damping operation mode (between v_{min} and v_{max}) and the predetermined hold force corresponding to the holding force mode (between zero and v_{min}). It is noted that Figure 1A shows that the predetermined hold force has a value higher than the interaction feedback force, as recited in the last three lines of Claim 18.

Turning to the applied art, Rosenberg discloses an interface device that allows a user to interface with a computer, and more particularly, a haptic feedback interface device allowing a user to interface with a graphical environment displayed by a computer.

Rosenberg shows in Figure 5c (and the outstanding Office Action relies on this feature when rejecting Claim 17, which recites a feature similar to Claim 18) that a force 324 is decreasing with an increase of the speed and a force 322 is constant. The outstanding Office Action appears to take the position that the force 324 corresponds to the claimed interaction feedback force and the force 322 corresponds to the claimed predetermined hold force.

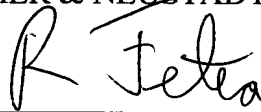
However, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 recites that the predetermined hold force is *higher* than the interaction feedback force while Figure 5c of Rosenberg shows that the force 322 is *equal* to the force 324 at the point where 322 meets 324.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 18 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over Rosenberg.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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